DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 304 209 PS 017 802

AUTHOR Miles, Sue L.
TITLE The Magic of Rapport: A Partnership between Children and Teachers.
INSTITUTION Waubonsee Community Coll., Sugar Grove, Ill.
PUB DATE 88
NOTE 16p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Chicago Association for the Education of Young Children (Chicago, IL, February 24-25, 1989) and at the Annual Meeting of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (Anaheim, CA, November 10-13, 1988).
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Early Childhood Education; Educational Practices; Guidelines; *Learning Centers (Classroom); Play; *Rapport; *Teacher Responsibility; *Teacher Student Relationship

ABSTRACT

Provided are 16 questions and answers about the development of rapport between young children and their caregivers. A self-assessment review for caregivers who are trying to develop rapport is offered. Also included is a brief outline of an interest center approach to play that specifies materials, ideas, and activities in the areas of social science, language development, science, mathematics, music, art, and sensory motor experiences. A summary of 25 steps that are important in creating rapport is provided. (RH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

The Magic of Rapport:
A Partnership Between Children and Teachers

Questions and Answers About the Subject

1. What is Rapport?

   Rapport is the "magic bond" that unites people (in this case teacher and child) and makes them feel like partners (Anthony Robbins, Power 1986:208). Rapport is a special type of understanding that is difficult to define.

2. Why is rapport needed?

   Rapport is needed to set the stage for discipline or guidance techniques that lead to self-discipline. Rapport requires trust and respect between individuals and those qualities form a partnership.

3. What more needs to be known about partnerships?

   Partnerships are relationships between at least two people that allows them to function cooperatively in group settings while still growing individually.

4. What about people who have different opinions and actions that cause difficulty?

   When we say people are "having differences," we mean that the ways in which they are not alike or think differently are causing all sorts of problems. This does not mean that people must be alike but that they must learn to accept and not pass judgment on other people's differences. Discussing differences does not have to imply judgment.

5. Does developing rapport imply being permissive?

   No, permissiveness is not generally understood in our society as positive because the term implies no limits, and since adults and children want to function in a well-organized, healthy environment, permissiveness does not work in building partnerships. Total permissiveness on anyone's part is not possible in good solid relationships.

6. What does rapport require?

   Rapport requires deep, personal involvement with children that will cause children to develop self-discipline. It requires enjoying each moment without judging, labeling or punishing. Life does not have to be made of miserable moments.

7. How can rapport be developed?

   Simple guidelines can help parents understand that guiding or disciplining children does not mean giving up on helping control children's behavior. Guidance also does not have to include negative factors and is an appropriate term to use since positive guidance implies acceptance, gentleness and leading. Guidance (if positive) suggests that simple but firm techniques will be employed and that happenings during interactions will be under-

stood. Guidance refers to "everything we do and say that influences the behavior of the child." (Hildebrand: 1980:4)

What is meant by a "happening" during an interaction is this:

I (the teacher) am explaining to you (the child) that hitting is not allowed--not because I want to stop you from doing what you want (that is from the action)--but because hitting hurts. In other words all people can be hurt by hitting, including you and I!

8. What else needs to be known about guidance?

1. Guidance is a total approach. (Hildebrand: 1980)
2. Guidance is based on our own personal value systems.
3. Guidance has often been thought of as discipline.
4. Punishment has been viewed as various acts (often negative in nature), that must be performed to stop or control negative behavior.(This thinking needs to be stopped.)
5. When people have failed to stop negative behavior, they have often become permissive and allowed children to do whatever they have wished. (This is absolutely no good.)
6. Self-discipline is really the only discipline that counts.

9. How can limits be set by a person?

People are basically alike in what they want and desire. To be content, people want many things; that is, they want many yes answers. But life is full of no answers as well. No answers are not always unpleasant since at times they are required. (Remember the example in question seven.)

10. But what if, for example, a toddler throws a tantrum? Isn't that unpleasant and shouldn't it be stopped. Can rapport be present during a tantrum?

When toddlers throw tantrums they are sending a signal of some type. Unless physically hurting themselves (such as banging their heads, which of course might need to be stopped by quiet but firm restraint) they may find the act very pleasant and will soon stop when it becomes too overwhelming. Most likely toddlers will want adults to differ with them in relation to the tantrum so that they temporarily gain control. Waiting for the tantrum to finish, accepts the need for expression. This is why toddlers could find tantrums pleasant. Tantrums are just one type of behavior exhibited that adults allow to break down child/adult relationships by bringing a reaction into that behavior.

11. Could more information be provided about setting limits while still maintaining a relationship?

The first way for adults to go about setting limits is to examine personal tolerance levels. It is from tolerance levels that the rules will emerge. The adult might ask self-examination questions similar to the following in order to decide how to set rules:

1) "Does a great deal of noise bother me?"
(If so, directing children to speak in soft voices can become one of the expectations.)

2) "When objects are in disarray about the house does that make me lose my composure?"
(If so, taking the time to teach children to put away their toys could be one of the rule choices.)

The questions that are asked, will come from personal adult feelings and value systems. That seems easy enough when it is first discussed; that is, deciding what is not wanted from the children. However, there is an important truth that cannot go overlooked. The truth is this: Children can follow many rules if only a few are set. In order for children to grow and develop positively, they must learn to make choices and think for themselves. If too many rules are set; that is, if children hear too many "no's" and not enough "yes's," they begin to disregard, break or ignore rules. If they follow too many "no" rules they lose their incentive, fail to think for themselves and become like robots.

12. Explain in more detail "yes" and "no" answers.

Children need "yes" and "no" answers to become well-adjusted individuals. That is why it is important to be aware of what children will and will not be allowed to do in a given environment.

In setting limits or making rules, it is a good idea to decide on a small number of definite "no's." There should be approximately five basic rules that are clearly defined for children. (It is important to remember that this depends on the ages and developmental stages of the children since children under 3 years of age do not usually reason well. Space does not allow for the close supervision of children under three years to be discussed in totality in this writing). The rules for children ages three years and older need to always include concerns for safety and the well-being of others. Some examples of overall limits usually required in a preschool setting include:

1) Hitting or hurting others in any way cannot be tolerated.
2) Leaving any work or play area without telling an adult is not acceptable.
3) Running in the room or inside the building can not be allowed.

One limit that depends on personal tolerance level could be:
Children must at least taste all foods when they are served.

It is true that ideally most adults want children to be well-behaved in all or most situations. The question then arises, "If only a few limits are set, how can children become generally well-behaved?" The truth is that once major limits are set, these limits carry over to other situations.

13. Again, how do limits specifically "tie-in" with rapport?

When limits are set children basically know what is expected. That leaves opportunity for effective communication and modeling to take place. Now children can talk about and/or model appropriate behavior, thus focusing on likenesses as opposed to differences in behavior. Positive messages can be verbalized.

14. Could more information about positive messages be provided?

The fact that guidance is made of both actions and words emphasizes the importance of using positive statements in ways to obtain results. If adults constantly issue commands to children using words like "don't," "quit," "stop," and "no," children will run around using the same language with their friends and/or other adults. The secret of positive guidance and the development of the rapport mentioned at the first of the paper is to develop a relationship with the child. To understand the importance of developing a relationship with the child, adults should think about themselves and the types of relationships to which they best respond. They must ask themselves, "Do I like for others to order me to 'quit doing something' of which they do not approve, or do I like to control my own behavior? Does a time come to mind when I can remember doing just exactly the opposite of what I would have done had someone not issued me an order?"

The following is a list of statements to be used with children. The statements have been changed from negative to positive:

Negative-Don't use	Positive-Do use
Sharon, stop hitting your friend Billy.	Sharon, hitting hurts. Tell Billy what you want.
Daron, if you bite Karen again, I will bite you back.	Daron, biting hurts. Biting is not allowed. Tell Karen what you want.
Milton, did you spit on your friend again? How could you be so nasty?	Milton, spitting hurts others since it is an unpleasant happening and saliva contains germs. When you feel angry, go pound the clay.

15. Remember, the younger the child, the fewer the number of words. Don't forget that there are many steps important in creating rapport. Here is a summary of those steps.

1) The playroom is composed of both permanent and temporary centers.
2) The teachers place objects (e.g.'s shells, rocks, feathers vegetables, fruits) at the reach of children and allow plenty of time for them to explore the objects--at least 45 minutes to 1 hours of free play. (See Appendix)
3) The teachers are interested in the objects and can discuss them with the children. (This will build trust between children and teachers.)
4) The teachers speak in quiet, calm voices and stoop to the eye level of children.
5) The children have a basic understanding of the overall guidelines that they must follow (discussed in the paper).
6) The teachers do not force activities on children but wait and encourage them to participate.
7) The teachers model the behavior they expect the children to use.

8) The teachers stay away from activities that are inappropriate for very young children. (e.g. organized games that induce competition, calendar exercises, art patterns, drill in relation to letters of the alphabet, colors or shapes, worksheets and show and tell exercises).
9) The teachers have prepared a room arrangement that tells the child what to do. (e.g. if manipulative toys are to be used at a table, the manipulative toy shelf should be placed near that table.)
10) The teachers can leave their personal problems at home when coming to work, at least for the majority of the time.
11) The teachers remember never to discuss children in front of them.
12) The teachers never laugh at, judge or label children nor do they use sarcasm with them.
13) The teachers listen carefully when children ask questions or have discussions with them.
14) The teachers give clear and simple directions to children.
15) The teachers interact in relation to problems at the same time the problems occur.
16) The teachers pre-warn children when there will be changes in schedules or plans.
17) The children are given choices only when they can make a choice.
18) The teachers avoid being authoritarian or giving too many directions.
19) The children are told why teachers have certain expectations.
20) The teachers avoid over questioning children, issuing commands or expecting more than children can give.
21) The teachers anticipate problems before they occur.
22) The teachers avoid praise but use encouragement instead. (See Value Talk booklet for further information on avoiding praise.)
23) The teachers help children label their feelings so that they better understand those feelings.
24) The teachers spend time observing children, and, if possible, recording behavior.
25) The teachers use restraint and time out only as a last resort.

When the above elements of direct and/or indirect guidance are used, most children will respond very well in the preschool environment. It takes time to learn how to implement these elements; however, the feelings of professionalism and self-satisfaction that result from the effort make all of the effort worthwhile. Once the elements are in place, <u>teacher rapport with children has been created</u>.

16. <u>Why are "magic bonds" which we have referred to as "rapport" and teacher/child relationships so important?</u>

While "gloom and doom" prophesies are not pleasant to consider, there are some grim realities facing our society. It is predicted that by the

---

*Dr. James Hymes has discussed many of these inappropriate activities in his book, <u>Teaching the Child Under Six</u>. If you use these activities try not to become offended. Most people use them until they read and experience otherwise.

year 2000 these realities will be occurring. Alvin Toffler, author of Future Shock, has reported that even though and in some cases because, large numbers of the population will live longer, people will have more problems. There will be world crisis due to universal lawlessness, debt, and food shortages. The highly technological society will cause many to suffer from something Toffler refers to as "adaptational breakdown." Rapport could help bring all people together so that we might live safe inside of goodness, self-direction and knowledge. Children at an early age need to perceive that people are more alike than different so that together all people can problem solve as they move through life.

A Review: Are You Developing Rapport With Children

1. Are you constantly concerned about "disciplining" children or do you try to develop smooth relationships with them?

2. Do you expect things from children that you do not expect from yourself?

3. Are you "permissive" with children one moment (allowing them to do whatever they want) and authoritarian the next?

4. Are you "personally involved" with children and do you show this by creating interesting experiences that you can share?

5. Do you accept differences between people and try to determine how that in spite of them, you are really very much alike?

6. Have you stopped "punishing" and started guiding?

7. Have you determined what you really want from children? (Decide on five or six basic things.)

8. Have you modeled the type of behavior that you want?

9. Do you understand why the development of rapport is important?

NOTES

APPENDIX

IMPROVED PLAY EXPERIENCES

THE INTEREST CENTER APPROACH AND PLAY

Interest Centers are a way of arranging objects in the environment to persuade the attention and participation of the child. The children are allowed a great deal of freedom in selection and use of the objects and the centers may often be devised in such a way that the use of all senses is involved. Most caregivers have been using permanent centers with children for years. Temporary centers are a way of changing and enhancing the everyday environment of the child.

Play is an important part of life. The young child provides the interested adult unlimited opportunity to gain insight into the very nature of the subject. Upon watching the child at play, however, one finds it a most in-depth and unscientific subject. At its best it is spontaneous - an experience with no goal. A product may emerge but the emphasis is most often the here and now process. When an occasional product emerges from pure or spontaneous play, it is one of true beauty.

Play is so much for so many. For the young child, play appears to be an expression of -- if not an overflowing enthusiasm for -- life itself.

In summary --

Play prepares the child for a more efficient life. The child who is immersed in play is often free if not freeing himself from neurotic behavior. The fortunate individual who carries this spontaneity into adulthood is most likely creative and gloriously alive. That person will usually enjoy life while contributing as a productive member of society. Interest centers enhance the permanent centers, bring the "outside world" into the playroom, and help structure the play environment of the child. As the adult plans the interest center he/she records the learnings thus preparing to later answer the questions of the child at play.

A CURRICULUM EXPERIENCE

CONCEPT: TURTLES

MATERIALS:

1. Green paper tablecloth cover.
2. Real Indian Tortoise in round bucket.
3. Word strips with "India" & "Turtle" on them.
4. Pictures of different turtles.
5. Book - Now I Know Turtles.
6. Various turtles - glass, rock, wood, plastic, pewter, porcelain & a toy turtle watch.
7. Real pond turtle shell.

SOCIAL STUDIES:

1. Turtles sold in pet stores. Some imported.
2. Different turtles live in different environments.
3. Children can perceive why exotic pets are not always a good idea.
4. Turtles are used for food.
5. Turtles have been around for millions of years and continue to survive.
6. Turtle shells have been used for bowls & decorative items

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT:

1. The words turtle, tortoise, terrapin, & India will be discussed.
2. Children will talk about what different display turtles are made of.
3. Children will discuss the turtle story.
4. India makes a little "Erk" sound every so often.
5. Children will engage in dramatic play with the display turtles.

SCIENCE:

1. Different kinds of turtles have special adaptations to suit the environment they live in.
2. Turtles in different environments have different diets.
3. A turtle is cold-blooded & needs to be kept warm to be active and digest food.
4. Different display turtles are of many different materials.
5. Plastic takeapart turtle & real turtle shell give an idea of turtle anatomy.
6. Children will learn that different types of turtles eat different foods & they will see how India eats. (tortoise)

MATH:

1. Children can count # of turtles.
2. Turtles have different-shaped shells with different-shaped sections.
3. Turtles have 4 legs.
4. Children can count sections on India's shell.
5. Children can count rings on each section to find India's age.
6. Children can see how the turtle's shell shape makes it very hard for him to turn right side up when overturned.

MUSIC:

1. Children can make up turtle chants when they see the turtle walk.
2. There is a definite rhythm to the turtle's walk.
3. Turtle shells are used to make instruments.
4. Children can learn many different songs about turtles.

ART:

1. Children will experience the aesthetic quality of the center.
2. Children will experience good animal photography in the pictures.
3. Children can see that turtles are many different colors, depending on their environment.
4. Display turtles are made of many different and beautiful materials.
5. Display turtles & book are very colorful.
6. Patterns on turtle shells are different & very pretty.

SENSORY MOTOR EXPERIENCES:

Children can:

1. Feel turtle's shell, head & legs.
2. Imitate the turtle's walk.
3. Feel & see all the different materials of which the display turtles are made.
4. See, feel & eat turtle's food. (Fruit & Veggies)

Bibliography

DeMause, Lloyd. The History of Childhood. New York: Harper and Row, 1974.

Hildebrand, Verna. Guiding Young Children. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1980.

Hymes, James. Teaching the Child Under Six. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1981.

Read, Katherine and Patterson, June. The Nursery School and Kindergarten. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1980.

Robbins, Anthony. Unlimited Power. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986.

Toffler, Alvin. Future Shock. New York: Bantom Books, 1981.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

SUE MILES has fourteen years experience in the classroom and thirteen years instructional experience in a community college setting. As a Department Coordinator she has taught more than fourteen classes, including subjects such as teaching methods, parent education, and interpersonal effectiveness. Sue has conducted between 1500 and 2000 seminars since 1968, often serving as keynote speaker, for colleges, public schools, national educational organizations, community groups and served as a private consultant to parents. She has also led a study group on a tour of London's British Infant schools. Recently, Sue has been listed in Who's Who in Midwest America, Who's Who in World Women, Who's Who of American Women, The International Directory of Leadership, Community Leaders of the World, and other biographical references. Sue has designed numerous child care settings and worked toward the improvement of low income day care as well as care for all children. A recent article written by Sue Miles, has been published by the Eric Clearinghouse, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in microfiche and hard cover. ED 271 209, is entitled "Value Talk: Helping Children Grow." She has also evaluated child development materials and most recently a leading language arts textbook used by numerous colleges in child development training. Sue testified before a U.S. Congressional Committee in relation to the need for day care in order for parents to be employed. For additional "fun" Sue reads, plays with her Yorkshire terriers, talks to many elderly people and models larger women's clothing for two stores in the area.

SUE MILES has helped teachers change many a dreary setting into places where pleasant and meaningful activities occur daily between teachers and children. Labeled by workshop participants as a "witty and dynamic speaker," Sue gives practical suggestions which can be put into immediate use. She openly admits she must constantly examine herself to consisently "stay alive."

SUE is currently a fourth year doctoral student at Nova University. You may take classes from Sue at Waubonsee Community College in Sugar Grove, Illinois. If you wish to have Sue speak to your educational organization, serve as a consultant to your family, or provide further child development information, call 312/466-4811, Extension 311 or 312/969-TOTS.